



## USAID's Bengal Tiger Conservation Activity (Bagh) Year Three, Quarter 2 - Summary of Progress



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## **USAID's Bengal Tiger Conservation Activity (Bagh)**

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### **Bagh Year Three Quarter 2 Summary of Progress**

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## Acronyms

ACME	Accelerating Commitment for Monitoring and Evaluation
AWP	Annual Work Plan
Bagh	USAID's Bengal Tiger Conservation Activity (USAID's Bagh Activity)
BBG	Bangladesh Border Guard
BCAS	Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies
BGB	Border Guard Bangladesh
CCF	Chief Conservator of Forests
COP	Chief of Party
CREL	Climate Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods
DFO	Divisional Forest Officer
ETRT	Emergency Tiger Response Team
EU	European Union
FD	Forest Department
FTRT	Forest Tiger Response Team
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GPS	Global Positioning System
HTC	Human Tiger Conflict
ICT	Institutional Capacity Development and Training
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MoEF	Ministry of Environment & Forests
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PEC	Project Evaluation Committee
QPR	Quarterly Progress Report
SAC	Special Award Condition
SCBI	Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute
SEALS	Sundarbans Environmental and Livelihoods Security
SERC	Smithsonian Environment Research Center
SI	Smithsonian Institution
SMART	Spatial Monitoring and Research Tool
SOW	Scope of work
SRCWP	South Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Protection
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
TPP	Technical Project Proforma
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VRT	Village Tiger Response Team
WCCU	Wildlife Crime Control Unit
WCS	World Conservation Society
WTS	Wildlife Technical Specialist
ZPO	Zoological Park Organization



## Introduction

USAID's Bagh Activity contributes to the protection of the Royal Bengal tigers and the conservation of the Sundarbans, with the overall goal of preserving the biodiversity of Bangladesh. Bagh is a four-year Project implemented by WildTeam in partnership with the FD of the MoEF, USAID, the Smithsonian Institution and the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies. This is the third year's SecondQuarter report of Project implementation. The report highlights key accomplishments during the implementation period of 1 April-30 June 2016.

## Year Three,Quarter 2- Summary of Progress

### Project Management Activity

Bagh's Project Management Team consolidated around the COP's arrival the previous quarter. The on-going uncertainty over WildTeam withholding a portion of the COP's salary for income tax purposes was raised with USAID and the Bangladesh Board of Revenue for resolution. After a meeting at the Prime Minister's Office with a wide variety of Bangladesh Government officials and the Project's AOR, the issue was resolved with an understanding that all non-Bangladeshi staff members are exempt from income taxes.

### Technical Implementation Activity

**Component 1 (Expanded knowledge base):** The Research Team is under Component 1.it carried out its planned activities this quarter. The activities initiated and/or accomplished in this quarter are:

- Data collected during fieldwork in SundarbansbetweenDecember2015 andFebruary2016have been analyzed and draft reports areinprogress. The team analyzed thevegetation sampling data collected in 2015 during this quarter.
- A pilot research study was conducted to detect changes in inland cover of Katka-Kochikhali region of Sundarbans East sanctuary. The final report is under review.
- The FD gave Bagh permission to ship biological samples to the Smithsonian Institution for DNA analysis.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with Chittagong Veterinary and Science University to collaborate in the area of disease monitoring and epidemiology research. The Research team also visitedBangladesh Livestock Research Institute (BLRI) and National Institute of Biotechnology (NIB) in June 2016to explore the scope for collaborative research in the area of disease monitoring and DNA analysis.
- Blood samples were collected from 100 dogs in 10 villages in the Sundarbans periphery to detect the presence of CDV (Canine Distemper Virus) in the dog population, which could be a potential threat to the tiger population in the Sundarbans.

**Component 2 (Reduced illegal wildlife trafficking):** Component 2 focused on strengthening the capacity of the GoB and civil society to respond to wildlife trafficking and engage regional and international bodies in the global efforts to prevent wildlife crimes. Activities in Q2 at a glance:

- A Training Needs Assessment report has been finalized to prepare the training module for a one month-long training that we expect will be conducted in September 2016 for selected FD staff on wildlife crime investigation and interrogation of suspects.
- Bagh helped the FD prepare a Community Patrol Group (CPG) Operational Guideline. The Guideline has been submitted to FD for review.
- Three SMART patrol phases were conducted from 29 May to 2 July 2016. The SMART patrol teams covered 2,479 km in 306 hours during the 35-day patrolling. Notably, a pirate camp was demolished inside the West Sanctuary during a joint operation with Bangladesh Coast Guard on 30 June 2016.
- Two Delorme devices (two way satellite communications equipment) were purchased and handed over to the patrolling team. The draft Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for patrolling activities was prepared and reviewed twice by Panthera. Bagh's Law Enforcement Specialist is currently reviewing the SOP.
- The Law Enforcement Monitoring (LEM) unit conducted two field trips to Satkhira range in Q2 to gather information on wildlife crime. 21 incidents of illegal wildlife seizure were recorded during the reporting period.
- The Tiger Hotline received 80 calls, and 12 incidents were validated and shared with local FD offices to take further actions. Information on two incidents was shared with the Wildlife Crime Control Unit (WCCU).
- Representatives of Bagh attended the Asian Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation held in New Delhi, India from 12 to 14 April 2016.

**Component 3 (Minimized human-wildlife conflicts):** Bagh Activity aims to prevent human wildlife conflict, reduce fatalities, and to provide victim relief through Component 3. The following activities were completed and/or initiated under this Component in this quarter:

- Bagh organized a regional workshop on VTRT sustainability in Khulna in May 2016. Donors and NGOs including GIZ, CREL, Concern International, World Fish and the Sundarbans Academy shared their experiences on co-management sustainability and outlined the best practices and potential future initiatives for VTRT sustainability.
- A total of 173 VTRT in-team and social meetings and 18 VTRT leaders' meetings were held in all four ranges of Sundarbans. 293 VTRT members received capacity development trainings from 1-6 June 2016.
- VTRT members and Community Conservation Action (CAT) staff helped FD and firefighters put out the fires that broke out in the Chandpai range on 13, 18 and 27

April. During the reporting period, the VTRTs and CAT field staff rescued 48 wild animals and successfully released them all into the forest.

- Bagh introduced a community-based training program for forest resource collectors with the help of the Forest Tiger Response Team (FTRT). A total of 16 training sessions were held in Q2 2016 where 135 forest resource collectors took part.

#### **Component 4 (Enhanced communications, outreach, and gender engagement):**

Component 4 has been addressing human threats to tigers, wildlife, and the environment by focusing on behavioral change through communications, outreach and gender engagement both at local and national level. The highlights of the activities carried out in Q2 2016 under this component are as below:

- 158 village forums were held in 22 wards of all four ranges of Sundarbans. A total of 3,580 local villagers were engaged, and the number of female participants (n=2000; 56% of total participants) was higher than male participants.
- A concept note on The Boat Chain (anticipated to be organized in October 2016) was drafted in June 2016. 'Conservation Hot Topics' were drafted and they will be used as a messaging tool in village forums and VTRT meetings.
- The Tiger Caravan wrapped up a successful four-month tour on 9 June 2016. Approximately 257,000 visitors in 47 districts with 220 shows visited the Tiger Caravan. A closing ceremony (experience sharing event) of the Tiger Caravan will be organized in the second week of August 2016.
- The team set up an interview of Bagh COP Mr. Gary F. Collins with popular Malaysian radio station BFM 89.9 on Bagh's conservation work in Bangladesh. The interview was aired on 24 May 2016 and focused on USAID's assistance to Bangladesh in conservation and Bagh's Project work.
- This quarter, the team published 13 issues of Tiger Tuesday, a weekly newsletter providing updates and success stories of USAID's Bagh Activity. The team also prepared an article on SMART patrolling for the Ranger Federation of Asia (RFA) Newsletter.
- Bagh participated in Bangladesh Youth Festival on 13-14 May at North-South University and a World Environment Day event at American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB) on 5 June. Bagh organized the inaugural ceremony for the Annual Honey Collection in Khulna on 1 April. Bagh also observed the International Day for Biological Diversity on 22 May in collaboration with FD and Khulna local administration.
- A service provider was appointed to customize the sales force CRM system for effective management of partnership interventions. Also, 500 units of a 'Bagh Partnership Package' were produced as a tool to expedite private-sector engagement with conservation efforts.

- The Partnership unit has made a priority list of potential partners, 26 organizations have been approached, and meetings were held with 14 of them. Follow-up communications are in progress with these 14 potential.
- A baseline survey was conducted to identify gender roles in conservation. All components, especially component-5 and component-3, will use the data from the survey to further strengthen gender roles through their activities. VTRT's women's engagement approach was finalized in Q2. Since 43 out of 49 VTRT teams have already said they want to see women joining their teams, the Approach will guide the VTRT members make necessary arrangements and/or systems to accommodate female members in their teams.
- Gender Working Committee meetings were held on 15 and 26 May in Dhaka and Khulna respectively. The meetings suggested adding a separate section on gender engagement in the monthly reports from every component. It was also recommended that the WildTeam Human Resources include a gender-focused performance evaluation section in the employee evaluation procedure.

### **Component 5 (Improved livelihoods for conservation):**

Component 5 made progress this quarter as part of its efforts to promote environmentally sustainable livelihood in Sundarbans periphery:

- 200 beneficiaries were trained in handicraft making in collaboration with HBPS (Pebbles), and subsequently a work order was received from Pebbles for the beneficiaries to fill the work order. The beneficiary selection process is underway for the second phase of the training. A meeting was held with Pebbles on Bagh branding for the crafts produced by the beneficiaries.
- Bagh has been negotiating on the potential collaboration with Crafts Villages Ltd. The organization agreed to revise the proposal it submitted earlier as the budget was higher than it should be. An exposure visit will be made to Tarango, a women's development organization, in August.
- Two STTAs came to Bangladesh in June and July. They held a meeting with the CEO of Ajiyer regarding eco-tourism in the Sundarbans. Meetings were also held with Bengal Tours, Silver Wave and Rupantar Eco Tourism & Pug Mark in June regarding collaboration in the area of eco-tourism in the Sundarbans.
- For the purpose of including CPG and their family members in the beneficiary pool, information is being collected from Satkhira and other Sundarbans ranges. The team began working with Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) to conduct a baseline survey on the impacts of livelihoods interventions.

### **Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)**

The activities initiated and/or accomplished in Quarter 2 include:

- The Bagh M&E Plan was updated and submitted to USAID on 30 June for approval.
- An Internal Data Quality Assessment (DQA) was conducted from 29 May to 1 June. The DQA report was shared with component leads and SMT on 22 June.

- The M&E team made field trips to all range and regional offices in April to follow up the implementation of online database and provided on-the-job training to ensure quality of data.
- The second Knowledge-Attitude survey was completed in June covering around 800 households.
- Bagh received the 'Socio-Economic and Environmental Baseline Survey on Wildlife Conservation in Sundarbans Impact Zone' report from Bangladesh Center for Advanced Studies (BCAS) on 29 June. The report provides a valuable insight into the current status of wildlife conservation and socio-economic & environmental situations in the Sundarbans periphery.

### **Institutional Capacity and Development Team (Team ICT)**

In Q2 of Y3, the Team ICT's key activities and achievements include.

- The training person-hours hit a record of 16,322 (person hours) this quarter against the target of 8,000 person hours. This achievement is around 204% of the target.
- 69.65% of the training person hours came from women participants with male participants contributing the rest 30.35%. The biggest chunk of training hours came from the crafts training for women beneficiaries under Component 5.
- The Team ICT organized a workshop on VTRT Sustainability Framework Development in Khulna and visited field offices prior to the DQA in addition to its regular activities including checking, verifying, and inputting training data into TraiNet and BaghTracks and organizing the hardcopies of training data.

### **Bagh Performance Progress (April-June16) based on performance indicators**

- Total training person-hours stood at 16,322 (standard indicator F4.8.1-29). This is around 204% of the target of 8,000. 69.65% of the 11,367 person-hours were generated by female participants.
- The Knowledge Survey (custom indicator 3) conducted in June indicates that 51.7% (women 41%) respondents obtained 41 and higher score in Knowledge. This is 14.1% higher than the quarterly target of 37.6%. The baseline for knowledge survey was 31.7%.
- The Attitude Survey (custom indicator 4) conducted in June indicates that 50.2% of the total respondents (41.6% of female and 54.7% of male respondents) obtained 61 and higher score in Attitude. This is 16.9% higher than the quarterly target of 33.3%. The baseline for attitude survey was 28.3%.
- In this quarter, 412 individual activities (custom indicator 5) were carried out by VTRT and BaghBandhu. This is 103% of the quarterly target of 400.



- Five priority research (custom indicator 6) activities (one threat assessment and four wildlife and habitat monitoring) were conducted in Q2. This is 100% of the quarterly target of five.
- In Q2, new areas of 789 hectares were covered by SMART patrolling (custom indicator 7) in Sundarbans West Sanctuary. Besides, a total of 68,348 hectares were covered by repeated patrolling by two SMART patrols.
- Two SMART patrols (custom indicator 9) were conducted inside West Sanctuary of Sundarbans during the reporting period. The achievement is 50% of the target.
- A total of 252 (252% of quarterly target) forest resource collectors used safety measures (custom indicator 10) during forest resource collection after receiving forest safety training from USAID's Bagh Activity.
- 49 human-wildlife conflict (4 tiger incidents) incidents took place during the reporting period and 100% of the situations were managed effectively (custom indicator 11). The achievement is 30% higher than the quarterly target.
- There was no result observed for the standard indicator F4.8.1-6, custom indicator 12 and 13.

*For details on performance progress, please see Annex I and Annex II.*

## **Annexes:**

Annex I: USAID'S Bagh Activity Performance Progress (April-June 2016) by disaggregation

Annex II: USAID's Bagh Activity Targets& Results (April-June 2016)

Annex III: Success stories and major achievements in Q2 2016

Annex IV: TigerTuesday published in Q2 2016



## USAID'S Bagh Activity Performance Progress Q2' 2016 (April – June) by disaggregation

## Standard Indicators

Ref.	Indicator & Disaggregation	Unit	Q2' 2016 Target	Q2' 2016 Result
F4.8.2-28	Number of laws, policies, strategies, plans, or regulations addressing climate change (mitigation or adaptation) and/or biodiversity conservation officially proposed, adopted, or implemented as a result of USG assistance	Number	0	0
	<b>Category</b>			
	Laws			
	Policies			
	Acts			
	Conventions			
	Strategies			
	Plans			
	Regulations			
	Agreement			
	Protocols			
	Guidelines			
	<b>Stages</b>			
	Analyzed			
	Drafted			
	Proposed			
	Accepted			
	Implemented			
F4.8.1-29	Number of person hours of training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation supported by USG assistance	Number	8000	16,322
	<b>Gender</b>			
	Men			4954.5
	Women			11367.5
	Third Sex			
	<b>Group</b>			
	Forest Department			37.5
	CMOs			30.0
	VRTs			4574.0
	Forest Resource Collectors			11590.5
	BaghBandhu			
	Students			
	Teachers			
	Researchers			
	Others (GO/ NGO etc)			90.0
F4.8.1-6	Number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resource management and conservation as a result of USG assistance	Number	400	0
	<b>Gender</b>			
	Men			
	Women			
	Third Sex			



## Custom Indicators

Ref.	Indicator & Disaggregation	Unit	Q2' 2016 Target	Q2' 2016 Result
Custom 1	Relative abundance of tigers in target habitat	Tiger track set/km (Khal survey)	-	-
	<b>Ranges</b>			
	Satkhira			
	Sharankhola			
	Khulna			
	Chandpai			
	<b>Sanctuary</b>			
	Sundarbans East			
	Sundarbans West			
	Sundarbans South			
		Number of tiger/100 square km (Camera trap)	-	-
	<b>Ranges</b>			
	Satkhira			
Custom 2	Relative abundance of tiger prey species in target habitat	Proportion of surveyed segments occupied by tiger prey (Khal survey)	-	-
	<b>Ranges</b>			
	Satkhira			
	Sharankhola			
	Khulna			
	Chandpai			
	<b>Sanctuary</b>			
	Sundarbans East			
	Sundarbans West			
	Sundarbans South			
		Index of tiger prey pictures obtained by Camera-traps at a sampling grid.	-	-
	<b>Ranges</b>			

Ref.	Indicator & Disaggregation	Unit	Q2' 2016 Target	Q2' 2016 Result
	Satkhira			
	Sharankhola			
	Khulna			
	Chandpai			
	<b>Sanctuary</b>			
	Sundarbans East			
	Sundarbans West			
	Sundarbans South			
Custom 3	Percentage of individuals with adequate knowledge in community groups on wildlife conservation	Percentage	37.6	51.7
	<b>Gender</b>			
	Men			57.4
	Women			40.7
	Third Sex			0
	<b>Group</b>			
	VRT			83.6
	BaghBondhu			94.4
	FRC			48.9
	TigerWidow			41.9
	Others (community people)			39.6
Custom 4	Percentage of individuals with positive attitude in community groups on wildlife conservation	Percentage	33.3	50.2
	<b>Gender</b>			
	Men			54.7
	Women			41.6
	Third Sex			0
	<b>Group</b>			
	VRT			72.1
	BaghBondhu			72.2
	FRC			52.4
	TigerWidow			32.3
	Others (community people)			41.4
Custom 5	Number of individual activities conducted by community groups (VRTs, Baghbondhu) for wildlife conservation	Number	400	412
	<b>Group</b>			
	VRT			251
	BaghBondhu			161
	<b>Type of activities</b>			
	Social meeting			203
	Wildlife rescue operation			46
	Commitment session			
	News			8
	Personal consultation			25
	Village forum			116
	Patrolling			5
	Other			9
Custom 6	Number of priority research studies conducted for better understanding of Sundarbans ecosystem	Number	5	5
	<b>Category</b>			
	Threat assessment			1
	Wildlife and habitat monitoring			4
	Social Research			

Ref.	Indicator & Disaggregation	Unit	Q2' 2016 Target	Q2' 2016 Result
	<b>Stages</b>			
	Planning			
	Data collecting			1
	Analyzing			4
	drafting			2
	Final reporting			
Custom 7	Number of hectares of biological significance and/or natural resources under improved natural resource management	Hectares	20000	789
	<b>Ranges</b>			
	Satkhira			789
	Sharankhola			
	Khulna			
	Chandpai			
	<b>Stages</b>			
	New			789
	Continue			68348
Custom 8	Number of joint community patrolling groups functioning	Number	0	-
	<b>Ranges</b>			
	Satkhira			
	Sharankhola			
	Khulna			
	Chandpai			
Custom 9	Number of SMART patrols conducted inside forest	Number	4	2
	<b>Ranges</b>			
	Satkhira			2
	Sharankhola			
	Khulna			
	Chandpai			
Custom 10	Number of forest resource collectors applying safety measures	Number	100	252
	<b>RC groups</b>			
	Honey collectors			151
	Fish and crab collectors			101
	Golpata collectors			
	Wood/fire wood collectors			
	<b>Genders</b>			
	Men			252
	Women			0
	Third Sex			0
	<b>Ranges</b>			
	Satkhira			124
	Sharankhola			58
	Khulna			70
	Chandpai			0
	<b>Stages</b>			
	New			252
	Continue			0

Ref.	Indicator & Disaggregation	Unit	Q2' 2016 Target	Q2' 2016 Result
Custom 11	Percentage of human-wildlife conflict incidences effectively managed	Percentage	70%	100%
	<b>Ranges</b>			
	Khulna			100%
	Satkhira			100%
	Chandpai			100%
	Sarankhola			100%
	<b>Type of wildlife conflict</b>			
	Tiger			100%
	Snake			100%
	Wild boar			100%
	Crocodile			100%
	Deer			100%
	Monkey			100%
	Jungle Monitor			
	Otter			100%
	Wildcat			
	Fishing cat			
	Wild fox			
	Bird			100%
Custom 12	Number of people in a target group (e.g. forest resource collectors) who have adopted eco-friendly AIG schemes	Number	150	0
	<b>Ranges</b>			
	Satkhira			
	Sharankhola			
	Khulna			
	Chandpai			
	<b>Gender</b>			
	Men			
	Women			
	Third Sex			
	<b>FRC Category</b>			
	Honey collectors			
	Fish/shrimp fry collectors			
	Crab collectors			
	Wood/goalpata collectors			
Custom 13	Amount of investment in eco-friendly AIG schemes through PPPs under Bagh	USD	20000	0
	<b>Ranges</b>			
	Satkhira			
	Sharankhola			
	Khulna			
	Chandpai			
	<b>Gender</b>			
	Men			
	Women			
	Third Sex			
	<b>AIG Category</b>			

## USAID's Bagh Activity Target vs Result Q2' 2016 (April-June)

SPS reference (f)/custom #	Title	Unit	Baseline	2016 Target (Apr-Jun'16)	2016 Result (Apr-Jun'16)	LoP Target	Cumulative Result (Jan'15-Jun'16)
Custom 1	Relative abundance of tigers in target habitat	Tiger track set/km (Khal survey)	0.36*	-	-	0.36	0.36*
		Number of tiger/100 square km (Camera trap)	2.17**	-	-	2.17	-
Custom 2	Relative abundance of tiger prey species in target habitat	Proportion of surveyed segments occupied by tiger prey (Khal survey)	80%*	-	-	80%	80%*
		Index of tiger prey pictures obtained by Camera-traps at a sampling grid.	NA	-	-	-	-
Standards & F4.8.2-28	Number of laws, policies, strategies, plans, or regulations addressing climate change (mitigation or adaptation) and/or biodiversity conservation officially proposed, adopted, or implemented as a result of USG assistance	Number	0	0	0	6	2
Custom 3	Percentage of individuals with adequate knowledge in community groups on wildlife conservation	Percentage	31.6%	37.6%	51.7%	61.6%	51.7%
Custom 4	Percentage of individuals with positive attitude in community	Percentage	28.3%	33.3%	50.2%	58.3%	50.2%

SPS reference (f)/custom #	Title	Unit	Baseline	2016 Target (Apr-Jun'16)	2016 Result (Apr-Jun'16)	LoP Target	Cumulative Result (Jan'15-Jun'16)
	groups on wildlife conservation						
Custom 5	Number of individual activities conducted by community groups (VTRTs, Baghbondhu) for wildlife conservation	Number	1300	400	412	4200	1771
Standards & F4.8.1-29	Number of person hours of training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation supported by USG assistance	Number	0	8000	16322	55560	31,981.50
Custom 6	Number of priority research studies conducted for better understanding of Sundarbans ecosystem	Number	0	5	5	10	6
Custom 7	Number of hectares of biological significance and/or natural resources under improved natural resource management	Hectres	0	20000	789	71500	69137
Custom 8	Number of joint community patrolling groups functioning	Number	0	0	0	6	0
Custom 9	Number of SMART patrols conducted inside forest	Number	0	4	2	30	14
Custom 10	Number of forest resource collectors applying safety measures	Number	0	100	252	1000	616
Custom 11	Percentage of human-wildlife conflict incidences effectively managed	Percentage	60%	70%	100%	80%	80.25%
Standards & F4.8.1-6	Number of people with increased economic benefits	Number	0	400	0	2400	0

SPS reference (f)/custom #	Title	Unit	Baseline	2016 Target (Apr-Jun'16)	2016 Result (Apr-Jun'16)	LoP Target	Cumulative Result (Jan'15-Jun'16)
	derived from sustainable natural resource management and conservation as a result of USG assistance						
Custom 12	Number of people in a target group (e.g. forest resource collectors) who have adopted eco-friendly AIG schemes	Number	0	150	0	600	0
Custom 13	Amount of investment in eco-friendly AIG schemes through PPPs under Bagh	USD	0	20,000	0	70000	0

Note: "--" data were not collected due to the implementation not started/maturity.

\* Result of Khal survey during 2015-2016 by USAID's Bagh Activity

\*\* Result from "Tiger Status Report of Bangladesh Sundarban" Published by Department of Forestry, Ministry of Forestry and Environment, Bangladesh October 2015.





USAID's Bagh Activity

# Success Stories

USAID's Bengal Tiger Conservation Activity (Bagh)  
Year Three, Quarter 2





## Engaging women in conservation

The training person-hours hit a record of 16,322 (person hours) this quarter against the target of 8,000 person hours. 69.65% of the training person hours came from women participants. A total of 200 women beneficiaries were trained in handicraft making, and subsequently a work order was received from HBPS (Pebbles) for the beneficiaries to fill the work order. The selection process is underway for the second phase of the training.

56% (2000) of the participants at 158 village forums were women. Also, four new topics were proposed for the Village Forum Guideline to educate the women further in regards to major conservation issues. The new topics include:

- Fire safety awareness and use of alternative fuels
- Enhancing women's stake in Tiger conservation activities
- Impact of environment change on woman
- Climate resilient livelihood options

VRTT's Women's Engagement Approach was finalized. Since 43 out of 49 VTRT teams have already said they want to see women joining their teams, the Approach will guide the existing VTRT members make necessary arrangements and/or systems to accommodate female members in their teams.





## SMART Patrolling: Pirate camp busted in the Sundarbans

Bangladesh Coast Guard (BCG) and a SMART patrol team under USAID's Bagh Activity knocked down a well-built pirate camp at Pushpakathi area in Sundarbans West Sanctuary during a joint drive on 30 June 2016.

The illicit establishment was a permanent camp occasionally used by the pirates for repairing trawlers and boats. A 15-member team comprising ten BCG personnel and five SMART patrolmen conducted the 1.5-hour drive and demolished the establishment completely.



## Bagh featured in Malaysian radio

Popular Malaysian radio station BFM 89.9 featured an interview with USAID's Bagh Activity's Chief of Party Gary F Collins on 24 May 2016 to discuss human-tiger conflict and the work being done by Bagh to conserve the Bengal tigers in Bangladesh Sundarbans.

In the extensive interview, Mr. Collins talked about the irreplaceable role of the apex predator in Bangladeshi culture and heritage, growing human-tiger conflict amid ecological degradation, and the challenges facing tiger conservation in Bangladesh. [Listen to the radio interview here.](#)



## TigerCaravan: A success beyond expectations

The TigerCaravan wrapped up a successful four-month tour on 9 June. It reached out approximately 257,000 visitors in 47 districts with 220 street theater shows, open quiz competitions and exhibitions. The hashtag #iStandforTigers continues to create buzz on social media and so far reached 2,080,211 users on Facebook with 217,773 likes and 6,127 shares. The campaign was featured in TV talk shows, radio programmes and hundreds of news stories in national and local media, both online and print.

The innovative campaign also mobilized support from local administration, lawmakers, political leaders, different government agencies, educational institutions and celebrities in its efforts to spread conservation messages across the country.



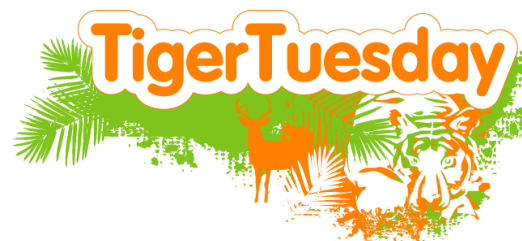
## Alternative livelihoods for beneficiaries: Work order from Pebble

200 Project beneficiaries were trained in handicraft making in collaboration with HBPS (Pebbles), and subsequently a work order was received from Pebbles for the beneficiaries to fill the work order. The beneficiary selection process is underway for the second phase of the training. A meeting was held with Pebbles on Bagh branding for the crafts produced by the beneficiaries.

Bagh earlier signed a MoU with Hathay Bunano Proshikhan Society (HBPS) to leverage a collaborative approach to improve the livelihoods of select beneficiaries near the Sundarbans periphery. HBPS exports "Pebble" branded toys to more than 36 countries with a mission to create decent and flexible income-generation opportunities for rural people.





**Issue 55 | 05 April 2016****USAID's Bagh Activity****#StandForTigers**

## Bagh arranges training on online database 'BaghTracks'

USAID's Bagh Activity held a day-long training in Khulna on 13 March 2016 and an orientation session in Dhaka on 29 March 2016 for its staff members and relevant stakeholders on the newly developed online database. This system will be launched soon to facilitate more effective data storage, documentation, analysis, reporting, and progress tracking for this multi-component Project.

A total of 49 participants (24 in Khulna and 25 in Dhaka) participated in the training sessions held at City Inn in Khulna and Platinum Suites in Dhaka. Dr. Atiq Rahman, Executive Director of Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS), opened the orientation event in Dhaka as the Chief Guest. The Project's BaghTracks is an ICT-enabled platform for the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system to enable the user to have a clear overview of the entire Project and its progress. The Bagh Monitoring & Evaluation, Reporting (M&E,R) team organized both the events to help the project staff and stakeholders develop necessary skills and expertise for mastering different features of the online database system.

Supported by the database development team, the training sessions included discussions and real-time demonstrations of the database platform followed by practice sessions. The development team explained the methods of data entry, verification, quality check, and report generation. The participants asked questions on different functional options of the database, and the developer team along with the M&E team responded to the queries. There were also group exercise sessions to help the participants apply their knowledge in a group setting. At the end of the trainings, the participants presented their findings of the group exercise for further improvement of the system. The training was an excellent opportunity for the project staff and stakeholders to improve their capacity to get the most out of the online database system.



BCAS Executive Director Dr. Atiq Rahman addressing the orientation session on 'BaghTracks' in Dhaka



A snapshot of the participants at the training on online database 'BaghTracks' in Khulna

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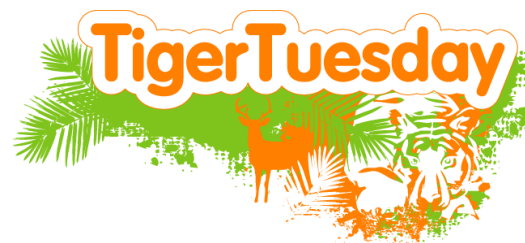
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**Issue 56 | 12 April 2016**
**USAID's Bagh Activity**

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 বাঘ সুরক্ষা করবো  
 #StandForTigers


## Bagh arranges safety training for forest resource collectors in Sundarbans

USAID's Bagh Activity arranged a four-day safety training for the fishermen and honey collectors in all four ranges of the Sundarbans on 28-31 March 2016 to ensure safe and responsible forest resource collection during this honey collection season.

The training was followed by the formal inauguration of the annual honey collection season in Satkhira on 1 April 2016. Fishermen and villagers around the Sundarbans collect wild honey from 1st April to 15th June every year. As the honey collectors move about in search of beehives in the wild, they run the risk of facing the mighty Royal Bengal Tiger and other potential hazards. So the objective of the training was to increase the safety knowledge of the forest resource collectors, promote sustainable harvesting of forest resources and make the fishermen and honey collectors aware of Bangladesh Wildlife Act and relevant compensation policy before they enter the Sundarbans.

A total of 439 fishermen and honey collectors participated in 9 training sessions held in four ranges of the Sundarbans. Forest department officials facilitated the training. Local Union Parishad members and VTRTs were also present as guests in most of the training sessions. The training was designed to disseminate seven most important safety messages to minimize the risk of casualties during the honey hunting deep inside the world's largest mangrove forest. The honey collectors were also taught how to escape tiger encounters safely inside the forest. Besides, the 'TigerTeam hotline number' was promoted among the participants. The VTRT members and WildTeam staff made a demonstration of different safety tactics at the end of the training to help the participants develop a better understanding of necessary safety measures. The participants were provided with a T-shirt, first-aid box, net and hat after the training to help them collect honey safely and conveniently.

## Annual honey collection season inaugurated in Satkhira

USAID's Bagh Activity organized the inauguration ceremony of the annual honey collection season in collaboration with Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD) and Bangladesh Environment Development Society (BEDS) at Burigoalini in Satkhira on 1 April to celebrate the start of the age-old tradition of honey collection.

Mr. Zahir Uddin Ahmed, Conservator of Forests, Khulna Circle and Project Director, USAID's Bagh Activity was the Chief Guest at the event held at Burigoalini Forest Primary School premises at Burigoalini in Satkhira range. The objective of the event was to increase awareness amongst the honey collectors about responsible forest resources collection, sustainable and hygienic methods of honey collection, and to make them commit to be respectful to relevant wildlife and forest laws. Unlike the previous years, this traditional ceremony began with a discussion session and ended with a field demonstration of honey collection. The discussion session was chaired by Md. Sayid Ali, Divisional Forest Officer of Sundarbans West Division. Md Shoaib Khan, Assistant Conservator of Forests, Satkhira Range; Vobotosh Mondol, Chairman of Burigoalini UP; Ashim Kumar Jwardar, President of Satkhira Co-management Committee; Mahbubul Alam, Coordinator, USAID's Bagh Activity were also present on the occasion. Several hundred honey collectors attended the inauguration event.



A Forest Department official is discussing about Bangladesh Wildlife Act at the training



A snapshot of the participants at the safety training for forest resource collectors in Munshiganj, Satkhira



Mr. Zahir Uddin Ahmed, CF, Khulna  
Circle and PD, USAID's Bagh Activity  
addressing the inauguration of annual  
honey collection season

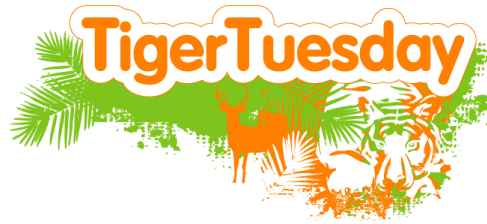
The annual honey collection season  
brings lots of expectations in the  
Sundarbans periphery

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**Issue 57 | 19 April 2016****USAID's Bagh Activity**বাঘ আমাদের গর্ব  
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#StandForTigers

## Bagh arranges training on wildlife crime analysis for Forest Department staff

USAID's Bagh Activity organized a two-day training on wildlife crime analysis for Bangladesh Forest Department (FD) officials on 24-25 February 2016 in Khulna to enhance their skills for effective data analysis using modern technology and equipment.

The training was the first-ever wildlife crime analysis training for frontline FD staff. This training is expected to boost their capacity and improve the quality of wildlife crime analysis to prevent wildlife crime and intensify tiger conservation efforts in the Sundarbans. A total of five FD officials responsible for data analysis at Khulna Geographic Information System (GIS) lab participated in the training along with three WildTeam staff members. The goal of the training was to help the participants improve their knowledge and expertise for optimum utilization of data from handheld GPS units, SMART output, camera traps, and other sources of information on wildlife crimes. The training focused on the best practices to generate digital spatial data from written reports and media information, and to prepare spatial reference maps that could be used to facilitate legal procedures against wildlife crimes.

Mr. Nasir Uddin, Programme Officer of USAID's Bagh Activity, led the training sessions as the chief trainer. The training comprised of theoretical sessions followed by practical demonstrations to offer a comprehensive understanding of both the theoretical and analytical aspects of wildlife crime analysis. Mohammad Sayed Ali, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Sundarbans West Forest Division, formally opened the training on 24 February 2016 at Tiger Database Center and GIS Lab, Bangladesh Forest Department, Boyra, Khulna. On the first day, the training covered theoretical topics including introduction to wildlife crime analysis, theories of wildlife crime, offenders' data collection, crime event data, and situational crime prevention in the context of Bangladesh Sundarbans. On the second day, practical sessions were held on crime data collection and patrol data handling using the Quantum Geographical Information System (QGIS). The practical sessions also covered spatial visualization of open source data and information grading based on the evaluation of source and offender profiling. Individual sessions and group activities during the training allowed the participants to exchange their ideas and views on different technical and theoretical aspects of wildlife crime analysis. The Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of the Wildlife Management and Nature Conservation Division presided over the closing ceremony of

the training on 25 February 2016.



BAGH Programme Officer Mr. Nasir Uddin facilitating the training on wildlife crime analysis on 24 February 2016



A snapshot of the participants at the Wildlife Crime Analysis Training in Khulna

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**Issue 58 | 26 April 2016**
**USAID's Bagh Activity**

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 বাঘ সুরক্ষা করবো  
 #iStandForTigers


## Bagh arranges first aid and forest safety training for FD officials, Project staff

First aid and forest safety is very important both for the wildlife conservation professionals and forest resource users. Adequate first aid skills and safety precautions can significantly minimize the impact of wildlife-human conflict by saving the lives of both humans and wild animals.

USAID's Bagh Activity organized a three-day training for selected staff members of Bangladesh Forest Department (FD) and USAID's Bagh Activity in Khulna on 19-21 March 2016 to build long-term capacity of the FD and Project staff to deliver first aid and forest safety trainings for local stakeholders and forest resource users.

A total of 24 participants attended the intensive training styled as "First Aid and Forest Working Safety Training" held at Hotel Castle Salam in Khulna. Professional trainers from Bangladesh Red Crescent Society facilitated the training sessions. The focus of the training was on providing the necessary knowledge and skills to help the participants deal with first aid emergencies and train their colleagues and beneficiaries in future. The training covered practical first aid techniques for cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and management of choking, bleeding, wound, fainting and unconsciousness. It also offered a greater understanding of shock, bites, bone fracture, drowning management, transportation of casualties, and other forest safety precautions.

The participants were awarded with certificates at the end of the training. Every trainee had to face practical, viva voce and written examination to pass the training course. Mr. Zahir Uddin Ahmed, Conservator of Forests, Khulna Circle and Project Director of USAID's Bagh Activity, presided over the certificate award ceremony. Two special guests- Mr. Ritesh Bhattacharjee, former Chief Conservator of Forests and Mr. Bhupendra Nath Talukder, former Divisional Forest Officer of Assam Forest Department of India, were also present on the occasion. The former Indian forest officials have long been associated with Wildlife Areas Development and Welfare Trust and look after a Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation Program in India. They shared their experiences with the trainees at the event.



A practical demonstration of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) during a training on first aid and forest safety in Khulna



A snapshot of the participants with the trainers and guests at the First Aid and Forest Safety Training in Khulna on 19-21 March 2016

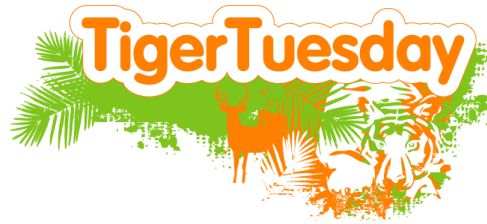
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**Issue 59 | 03 May 2016****USAID's Bagh Activity**বাঘ আমাদের গর্ব  
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#StandForTigers

## Bagh launches two-month handicrafts training in Sundarbans to foster alternative livelihoods

USAID's Bagh Activity in collaboration with local non-profit enterprise Hathay Bunano Proshikhan Society (HBPS) launched a two-month handicrafts training program on 11-13 April 2016 for select beneficiaries in Satkhira and Chandpai Range to help them generate income by making handicrafts.

The training was inaugurated in four training centers at Mirgang and Datinakhali Purbopara in Shatkhirra, and Uttar Rajapur and Rotia Rajapur in Chandpai. The training program targets to train around 500 women from the Sundarbans community. The trainees are mainly female household members of VTRTs (Village Tiger Response Team), BaghBondhu (Tiger Ambassadors), BLC (Boat License Certificate) holders and forest resource collectors.

Earlier in January 2016, Bagh signed a MoU with HBPS to leverage a collaborative approach to improve the livelihoods of select beneficiaries near the Sundarbans periphery. HBPS exports "Pebble" branded toys to more than 36 countries with a mission to create decent and flexible income-generation opportunities for rural people. After the training, HBPS will provide the beneficiaries with raw materials (i.e. thread, crochet needles, scissor) for making toys in their homes maintaining the quality standards. HBPS will purchase the handicrafts and given their skills had been fully developed, the beneficiaries could potentially earn BDT 4000-6000 (\$50-\$75) a month by making handicrafts.

Mr. S M Shoaib Khan, Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) of Satkhira Range, Mr. Md. Belayet Hossain, ACF of Chandpai Range, Mr. S M Rezwana Kawsar, Rural Center Manager of HBPS; Bagh Livelihoods Manager Mr. Mohammad Ehsanul Haque, Livelihoods Specialist Mr. Mahmudul Hassan, Livelihoods Specialist (Crafts) Mr. G M Morshed Siddiqui, Livelihoods Specialist (Honey) Mr. Mizanur Rahman and local leaders were present at the launching events of the training program in four locations.



FD and Bagh officials open the handicrafts training program at Datinakhali Purbopara in Shatkhira



The trainees were briefed on different aspects of the training during the inauguration

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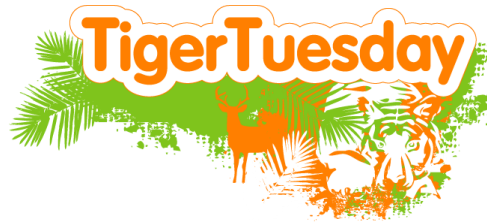
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**Issue 60 | 10 May 2016****USAID's Bagh Activity**

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#StandForTigers



## 3rd Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation: Nations vow to double global tiger population by 2022

The 3rd Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation was held in New Delhi, India on 12-14 April 2016 to discuss and plan how double the tiger population by 2022. Hosted by Global Tiger Forum (GTF), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and Wildlife Institute of India (WII), the three-day conference adopted a resolution that will guide tiger conservation efforts in the next six years to achieve this goal.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the conference that was attended by delegations from all thirteen tiger range countries, including Bangladesh. Environment and Forest Minister Anwar Hossain Manju and Chief Conservator of Forests Md. Younus Ali represented Bangladesh at the conference. Four representatives from USAID's Bagh Activity, including Katherine J. Wachala, Deputy Chief of Party and Dr. Sandeep Sharma, Wildlife Technical Specialist, attended the conference. A joint report prepared by Bangladesh and India on tiger conservation was launched at the inauguration of the conference.

The resolution adopted at the ministerial conference builds on the commitments of tiger range countries at the Global Tiger Summit at St. Petersburg in 2010 to double the world's tiger population by 2022. Representatives from each of the thirteen tiger range countries made presentations on their current status, successes and challenges they faced in tiger conservation. Delegations from the tiger range countries also took part in technical sessions and panel discussions on habitat management, anti-poaching, trafficking, capacity building & leadership, resource mobilization and SMART Green Infrastructure to share knowledge and best practices in tiger conservation. Since tigers were declared functionally extinct in Cambodia just a few days before the conference, this issue received special attention among the tiger experts and policymakers at the conference. Against this backdrop, a workshop on tiger re-introduction in Kazakhstan and Cambodia was held on 11 April ahead of the conference.



MOEF Minister is seen with Indian Prime Minister and Indian Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister at the Ministerial Conference in New Delhi

Photo Credit: AMC authority



CCF Md. Yunus Ali is speaking at the 3rd Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation

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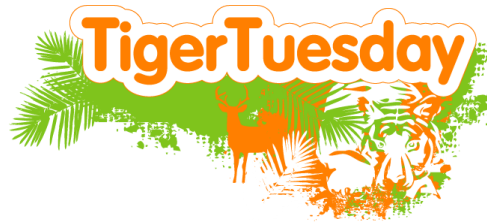
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**Issue 61 | 17 May 2016****USAID's Bagh Activity**

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#StandForTigers



## **TigerCaravan pulls 240,000 visitors in 28 districts throughout Bangladesh**

The TigerCaravan has so far pulled around 240,000 visitors during 77 days of tour in 28 districts across the country with mobile exhibition of a Sundarbans diorama, street theater troupe and social media activities to raise awareness by disseminating tiger conservation messages to people from all walks of life.

As part of the two-year National Tiger Awareness Campaign under USAID's Bagh Activity, the TigerCaravan embarked on a three-month journey on 11 February 2016 to create mass awareness about tiger conservation by visiting 100 strategic locations across the country. With the slogan 'Tiger is our Pride- We shall Protect Tigers', TigerCaravan has been engaging general public, especially the youths through social media using the hashtag #StandForTigers. The social media intervention aims to leverage a long-term and sustainable impact of Bagh Activity's efforts to save the critically endangered Sundarbans tigers. As of 15 May 2016, TigerCaravan organized 181 shows in strategically important locations including 93 educational institutions in 28 districts throughout Bangladesh.

Since the beginning of its journey, TigerCaravan has been creating a huge buzz on social media, and the Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to the Caravan on 26 March 2016 has put the National Tiger Awareness Campaign on the center of discussion both at local and national level. As of 30 April 2016, TigerCaravan activities reached 1,366,115 users on Facebook with 76,763 likes and 2,941 shares on the most popular social media platform.

### **Districts covered so far (28)**

Dhaka, Gazipur, Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Faridpur, Madaripur, Barisal, Jhalokati, Pirojpur, Bagerhat, Khulna, Satkhira, Jessore, Magura, Jhenaidah, Kushtia, Pabna, Natore, Rajshahi, Naogaon, Bogra, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Sirajganj, Tangail, Jamalpur, Mymensingh and Kishoreganj.

### **Upcoming tour**

The TigerCaravan will visit Habiganj, Moulvibazar, Sylhet, Chittagong, Rangamati, Bandarban and Cox's Bazar in the next few weeks. The Caravan team has a plan to arrange another round of tour in Dhaka before the TigerCaravan wraps up its activities through a closing event.





School children are eagerly waiting to take a tour inside the TigerCaravan



Street theater shows are also attracting huge crowds



The mini Sundarbans inside the TigerCaravan is disseminating tiger conservation messages



TigerCaravan is currently en route to Sylhet and Chittagong divisions

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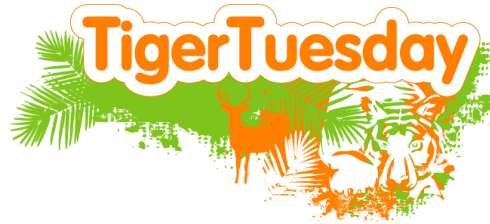
## Issue 62 | 24 May 2016



**USAID's Bagh Activity**



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#StandForTigers



## Bagh rescues and sets free 12 wild animals in 2016

USAID's Bagh Activity's field staff and the Village Tiger Response Teams (VTRTs) rescued 12 wild animals that strayed into the human territory, and released the animals back into the forest in the first quarter (January-March) of 2016.

Two deer, three monkeys, five snakes, one lesser adjutant, and a wild cat cub were rescued from Sharankhola, Satkhira and Chandpai forest ranges and later released safely into the forest with support from Bangladesh Forest Department. USAID's Bagh Activity has been driving a social change for wildlife conservation in Sundarbans periphery by minimizing human-wildlife conflict. To deliver a more enabling environment for human-wildlife coexistence, Bagh has been identifying the gaps in capacity and providing support to the VTRTs and local communities with necessary trainings and behavioral change interventions to reduce conflict incidents. This will aid in the overall conservation of tigers and reduce the unnecessary misery inflicted on local communities to help secure their support for long-term tiger conservation.

Wild animals often stray into the locality due to habitat loss, scarcity of foods, natural disaster and poor health condition. USAID's Bagh Activity has been engaging local people and VTRT members to address the challenge of human-wildlife conflict and prevent retaliatory killing of wild animals. Bagh's intervention has been crucial in this area as the local community lacks necessary knowledge, expertise and logistics to rescue wild animals and release those back to the wild safely.



Bagh and VTRT team rescued a python  
to release it into the wild safely



Being freed, the python moves itself to  
it's paradise



Bagh Team setting free a deer into the  
Sundarbans

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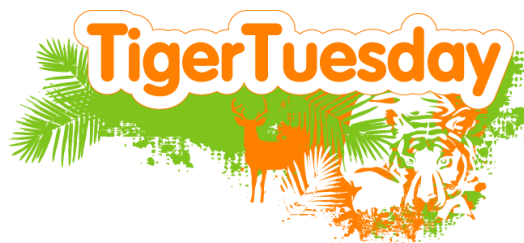
## Issue 63 | 31 May 2016



**USAID's Bagh Activity**



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## VRTTs volunteer with FD, firefighters to extinguish wildfires in Sundarbans

The Village Tiger Response Team (VRTT) members extended all-out support to the Forest Department and firefighters to respond quickly to the recent fire incidents in the Sundarbans and douse the fires effectively.

Three fire incidents took place near the Dhansagar forest station area in Chandpai range of Sundarbans on 13th, 18th and 27th April 2016. In each instance, the VTRT members were the first to realize that there was a fire inside the forest as informed by the resource collectors. The VTRTs then promptly informed the nearest Forest Department office and respective range staff of WildTeam about the fire. The FD officials also sought help from the VTRTs to verify the news about the fire and detect the location and magnitude of the blaze for taking necessary measures to douse the fire. Around 12 to 15 members of different VTRT teams assisted the fire fighting units in each fire incident inside the forest. The VTRTs helped the firefighters set up their hoses and connect those to suitable water sources to douse water into the fire. The VTRTs also helped the forest department bring the fire under control.

The local villagers in the meantime lauded the role of the VTRTs in dousing the wildfires. Mr. Solaiman, a villager, told WildTeam officials that the forest was saved mostly because of VTRTs' quick response to the fires. Mr. Salim, an elderly villager, said the VTRTs were there all the time and worked hard to put out the fire. "No one worked as hard as they did. They are the real heroes of our village," he said.



VRTTs are helping the firefighters douse  
a fire inside the Sundarbans

VRTT members are carrying water  
to extinguish a wildfire in Sundarbans

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**USAID's Bagh Activity****#iStandForTigers****Issue 64 | 07 June 2016**

## USAID's Bagh explores ideas, collaboration for sustainable VTRTs in Sundarbans

USAID's Bagh Activity organized a day-long 'Regional Workshop on Sustainability Framework Development for the Village Tiger Response Team' on May 25, 2016 in Khulna to explore the opportunities and challenges of sustaining the activities of VTRTs.

Prior to the regional workshop, two community-level training cum workshops and a consultation session with academics were held in February 2016 to explore ideas on different aspects of VTRT sustainability through consultation.

Mr. ZahirUddin Ahmed, Conservator of Forests, Khulna Circle and Project Director of USAID's Bagh Activity; Mr. Gary F. Collins, Chief of Party and Ms. Katherine J. Wachala, Deputy Chief of Party of USAID's Bagh Activity and representatives from Forest Department, CMC, VTRT, GIZ-SMP, CREL, Concern Worldwide, WorldFish and Sundarbans Academy attended the regional workshop at CSS Ava Center, Khulna.

The regional workshop and consultation session were organized to explore the VTRT's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It also sought to understand the experience and co-management practices in tiger conservation in Sundarbans, learn more about government support and relevant community-based wildlife conservation efforts, review the achievements and current status of VTRTs, generate ideas and set the parameters for sustainable VTRTs. The workshop-cum-training events with the VTRTs focused on exploring the concept of sustainability from VTRT members' own perspective as Bagh recognizes the importance of engaging them in the process of developing a sustainability plan.

Formed in 2008, VTRTs are a community-based volunteer group dedicated to conserve tigers in the Sundarbans. Over the years, VTRTs have become the largest network of

volunteers for wildlife conservation in Bangladesh with a total of 49 teams comprising around 340 volunteers.



A snapshot of a regional workshop on Sustainability Framework Development for VTRT in Khulna on 25 May 2016



VTRT members attend a training workshop to discuss issues related to sustainability of their initiative

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**USAID's Bagh Activity****Issue 65 | 14 June 2016**

## USAID's Bagh conducts Data Quality Assessment to deliver flawless reporting

USAID's Bagh Activity conducted an internal Data Quality Assessment (DQA) to evaluate the quality of reported data and data management systems. Bagh M&E Team and the Strategy, Project Management and Monitoring & Evaluation (SPMME) unit of WildTeam carried out the DQA in four range offices at Sarankhola, Chandpai, Satkhira and Khulna on 29 May-2 June 2016.

The objectives were to check quality of data, follow-up the data management systems maintained by the field teams, and provide on-the-spot training to staff members if required. Bagh developed a checklist against which the assessment was conducted.

The DQA team thoroughly scrutinized all reported data available both in hard and soft copies, and found that the range offices were following the data collection guidelines, maintaining proper documentation methods and making the best use of online database 'BaghTracks'. During the assessment, the team also discussed their observations on data quality standards and documentation process with different teams to help them produce quality data more effectively. Besides, an on-the-spot training on the newly adapted online database was organized to support continual improvement in data quality. The DQA team also met with some Project beneficiaries in Sarankhola range. The beneficiaries informed that they received safety training from USAID's Bagh Activity which has been very helpful in everyday life and work. In Satkhira, the team visited a handicrafts training center established by Bagh in partnership with Hathay Bunano Proshikhan Society (HBPS). The assessment team also paid a visit to a VTRT capacity building training at Dacope upazila in Khulna to assess the attendance systems and tools.

**Upcoming activities:** The TigerCaravan has completed its four-month nationwide tour on 10 June 2016 with a mission to spread tiger conversation messages throughout



Bangladesh. As part of the two-year National Tiger Awareness Campaign, TigerCaravan pulled more than 250,000 visitors in 47 districts. USAID's Bagh Activity will organize an 'Experience Sharing Event' in July to highlight the success stories of the TigerCaravan.



A snapshot of a DQA session at Chandpai Range Office in Khulna



The DQA team is scrutinizing all reported data at Satkhira Range Office

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**USAID's Bagh Activity****Issue 66 | 21 June 2016**

## 330 VTRT members get capacity development training

USAID's Bagh Activity organized capacity development training for 330 Village Tiger Response Team (VTRT) members in all four ranges of the Sundarbans on 1-6 June 2016. The training was a part of Bagh's continued efforts to elevate the skills and capacity of VTRTs to minimize human-wildlife conflicts and motivate their communities to support tiger conservation.

VTRTs in each range were divided into two groups, and a two-day training session was arranged for each group in different locations of four Sundarbans ranges. The training covered a wide range of topics including Sundarbans and its biodiversity, VTRT concept & sustainability, volunteerism, public speaking, team management, wildlife rescue and handling, snake and snake bite management, basic first aid, Wildlife Act and Compensation Policy and wildlife-human conflict management. As the VTRTs provide first aid to those injured during human-wildlife conflicts, each team was provided with a first aid box at the end of the training. Bagh also gave the participants other promotional materials such as rain coat, T-shirt, notepad and pen.

The VTRTs, popularly known as TigerTeam, is a community-based network of volunteers who respond promptly to stray tiger situations and human-wildlife conflicts in the Sundarbans periphery. Formed in 2008, VTRTs have become the largest network of volunteers for wildlife conservation in Bangladesh with a total of 49 teams comprising around 330 volunteers. Though the VTRTs were initially dedicated to minimizing human-wildlife conflicts, the volunteers have also been supporting the families of tiger victims to apply for compensation, raising forest safety awareness among the resource collectors and assisting the authorities to combat wildlife crime.





VTRTs are demonstrating the techniques to send a stray tiger back to the forest



A snapshot of the VTRTs at the capacity development training

## USAID's Bagh featured in Malaysian radio program



Popular Malaysian radio station BFM 89.9 featured an interview with USAID's Bagh Activity's Chief of Party Gary F Collins on 24 May 2016 to discuss human-tiger conflict and the work being done by Bagh to conserve the Bengal tigers in Bangladesh Sundarbans. In the extensive interview, Mr. Collins talked about the irreplaceable role of the apex predator in Bangladeshi culture and heritage, growing human-tiger conflict amid ecological degradation, and the challenges facing tiger conservation in Bangladesh. [Listen to the radio interview here.](#)

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**USAID's Bagh Activity****#iStandForTigers****Issue 67 | 28 June 2016**

## Bagh conducting research on dog disease that might threaten Sundarbans tigers

USAID's Bagh Activity collected blood samples from 100 dogs in 10 villages in the Sundarbans periphery to detect the presence of CDV (Canine Distemper Virus) in the dog population. There is a possibility that CDV could be transferred from dogs to the Sundarbans tigers. Canine Distemper is a serious viral illness that is believed to be an emerging threat that could be one cause for the decline of tiger numbers in some tiger-range countries, including India and Russia. This deadly virus could potentially affect the Sundarbans tigers due to the fact that humans, their domestic carnivores (dogs and cats) live in close proximity with the big cats. A symptom of canine distemper is that tigers seem to lose their fear of humans and this increases the chance of tigers straying into nearby villages, thereby causing human-tiger conflicts.

During the sampling, between 3-12 May 2016, the team captured 10 dogs from each village and took blood (5 ml) and serum (1.5 ml) from each dog. The sample collectors caught the dogs by hand instead of using nets because this method is safer for both the handler and the dog. A balanced sedative of Xylazine and Atropine was administered on the dogs to make them calm during the blood collection. The dogs become drowsy without becoming fully anesthetized. The dogs fully recover from the amnesia moments after the blood collection. The team also took the GPS points of the dogs' location, injected vaccines and marked the dogs with color and ribbon. The blood samples are stored in a minus 80 degree centigrade freezer at Khulna University.

Apart from sampling these dogs for CDV, Bagh's Research Team is also conducting a survey to assess the knowledge of local people about dogs and CDV. A total of 23 villages were selected for the study based on the recent history of higher tiger-human conflicts and injury or predation of dogs. The team will sample around 10 dogs in each village. The Village Tiger Response Team (VTRT) members assisted the Research Team by controlling crowds during the field activities.



Collection of blood sample from a dog for CDV test



Use of hand-catching techniques for handling dogs during blood collection

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